

HOW TO RESPOND TO A DISCLOSURE OF SEXUAL ASSAULT OR SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Responding to and supporting someone who has had an unwanted sexual experience can be complex, but chances are they have come to you because they trust you.

Be compassionate, respectful and supportive.

It takes courage to speak out.

Remember, they are never at fault, and they're the best person to decide the next steps.

1 Are they safe?

Call 000 if there is an immediate danger, or confirm they have somewhere safe to stay.

UTS Security can offer 24-hour support, call 1800 249 559 or dial 6 from an internal phone.

2 Listen and show support

Don't interrupt. Acknowledge their distress.

Ask "what can I do to help?"

Encourage them to seek support and feel a sense of control.

3 Provide information on available counselling services and resources

Help is available, both at UTS and externally:

At UTS contact:

- the UTS Counselling Service on (02) 9514 1177, or
- the 24 hour UTS Sexual Assault Support Line on 1800 531 626

Externally:

- A list of further support services and resources in the community are available on the UTS website: uts.ac/rna-support

4 Give the option to make a formal report

Individual reports provide crucial information to help UTS create a safe environment. A report can be made:

At UTS:

- In person to UTS Counselling, Security or Health Services
- Online through the Sexual Assault Reporting Form found at: uts.ac/rna-report

To the NSW Police

- The Sexual Assault Reporting Option (SARO) questionnaire: Google NSW Police SARO

5 Complete the staff online reporting form (required)

Staff who receive a disclosure of an incident must complete the online Confidential Reporting of a Sexual Offence form:

- Found on UTS Staff Connect: uts.ac/rna-staff

You are required to inform the person disclosing the incident that their information will be de-identified and reported to UTS.

6 Get assistance and make a Police report (if required)

The mandatory staff online reporting form in step 5 contains advice about who to consult and clarifies when you may be legally required to make a Police report.

UTS Security will assist with reporting to Police if required.

Student Voice insights

Since students are more likely to disclose to people they trust, student-facing staff (including casual academics) need to be prepared to provide a supportive response.

Student Voice insights

A supportive response from the first person a victim of sexual abuse discloses to can greatly reduce their trauma.

Student Voice insights

Every situation is different and each individual has different needs and wants. These may include motivations to either seek support, justice or even take no further action.

Student Voice insights

Unknown consequences can deter students from taking action. Advise students of their options, and the actions you are required to take as a member of staff.